

For Her Sake; The Murder in Furness Wood.

CHAPTER XVIII

"I do not see why Furness should be dear to you," Diana returned haughtily.

"From anticipation," laughed Evadne. "I anticipate so much happiness and enjoyment there that I love it already." Then, with a graceful gesture, Evadne took one of the hands of her sister and one of the hands of her own and held them. "What a strange thing it is," she said—"we three shall be sisters!"

"I do not see that at all," said Diana.

"Nor do I," added Thea. "It will be so," laughed Evadne. "I wonder how we shall like each other? I wonder how we shall agree—whether we shall be jealous of each other and quarrel and say spiteful things?"

"I do not think we shall agree at all," confessed Thea; "and I strongly object to any nonsense, such as calling each other sisters. I am quite sure that Miss Cameron cannot like us. If the position were reversed, we should not like her. We shall get on much better without any false pretences."

Diana rather liked this plain speaking, but Evadne resented it.

"How can you be so disagreeable, Thea?" she asked.

Diana turned away abruptly, for she had not been used to such vulgar exhibitions, and they jarred on her better nature.

It was strangely unlike home; the small dining-room, the incessant chattering of the girls, the heat, the novelty, all together embarrassed her. She looked at her father, seated at the head of this table so different from his own, and she wondered how anything could reconcile him to the change. At Furness his thoughts and interests had been concentrated on her alone; now she was but one of many. At Furness he had time to address her. At Furness it was she who sat at the foot of the table, led the conversation, and gave orders; here she sat at the side, and was treated as an ordinary member of the family.

"It is easier to fill it here than it will be at Furness." All the evening she had the same sensation of loneliness and of being among strangers.

"I shall never be at ease with those two girls," she said to herself. "I don't know which I dislike the more—the abruptness of the one, or the insincerity of the other."

In a few days Diana grew more accustomed to her new life, but only to dislike it more heartily.

One afternoon, when the two girls were absent, the heiress was with her father in the only room he could tolerate in the house. Diana had been, according to her old custom, writing some letters for him, when suddenly he opened his writing-desk and took out a parcel.

"Diana," he said, "I am always forgetting to give you this."

"What is it papa?"

"A present that I brought you from Paris. I hope you will like it. Open it, Diana, and see."

He watched the white taper fingers as they unfurled the cord; he watched the lovely face brighten as her eyes fell on the superb necklace.

"You bought this for me? Oh, papa,

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how good you, how kind! How beautiful it is! I have nothing amongst all my jewels so lovely as this."

"You really like it, Dian?" he asked.

"Like it? Why, papa, it is the most beautiful necklace I have ever seen, truly the most beautiful!"

"Lady Cameron expressed herself in the same fashion," remarked her father.

"Did she?" asked Diana, with cold indifference.

But he was so elated with her delight that he did not detect her change in tone.

"She admired it exceedingly," he said. "Indeed, to tell the history of the matter, it is her ladyship's present to you. I bought some few things for Thea and Evadne; she in return bought this for you." He did not add that he had been allowed the privilege of paying for it. "It is," he amended, "my wife's present to you."

Diana dropped the diamonds as though they had suddenly grown red hot, and they fell upon the velvet case. She could not control the expression of her face, and it told pretty plainly that she would rather wear a necklace of thorns than one of jewels given to her by Lady Cameron. She pushed away the case without another word and went on with her reading.

Her face flushed and her heart beat wildly in a tumult of passion.

Wear jewels that her step-mother had bought? No, never! The impulse was strong upon her to take the case from the table and fling it into the street. Once she half rose to do so; but her better nature prevailed.

There was an awkward silence, and Peter Cameron looked deeply grieved. He could not mistake the expression on Diana's face. At last he rose to quit the room, and as he did so, he pointed to the case.

"Diana," he said, quietly, "will you not take that away?"

There was a minute's terrible struggle in her heart; the hot blood rushed to her face; her whole frame trembled with angry passion. She longed to say, "No; I will never touch them again now that I know from whom they come!" She longed to say it; the words seemed to burn her lips. In another moment she would have uttered them—would have flung away the jewels and alienated her father's affection—when suddenly Sir Royal's

face seemed to rise before her, and there sounded in her ears his noble truths about life and life's discipline. The angry flush faded, the clinched hand fell by her side, the light of passion died from her eyes. Never did human being make greater effort to attain self-control than did Diana at that moment.

Then she went to her father and kissed him.

"Yes, papa," she said; "I will take it away," and, raising the jewel-case from the table, she carried it off with her.

It was a great effort at self-mastery. When she reached her own room, her face was pale and her lips quivered; yet there was a sense of peace and satisfaction with it.

"My third victory!" said Diana. "I do not think even Royal would call me proud now."

She put away the necklace, and completed her self-sacrifice by thanking Lady Cameron for it. But she never wore it.

Although Diana was anxious to combat her pride, and thus give no cause of offense to her step-mother or pain to her father, there was one resolution she strictly adhered to—she would not be included in any arrangements made for Thea and Evadne. If Lady Cameron asked her to drive out with them, she answered that four in a carriage were too many. If Lady Cameron observed at luncheon or at dinner that she had made an engagement for "the girls," Diana always politely declined it.

"I am obliged to be with them," she thought; "but I am not compelled to be of them."

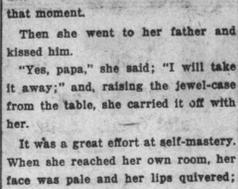
In everything she drew a line between herself and them. She was polite and well-bred in all her dealings with them; but they could see plainly that she merely tolerated and did not really like them.

Diana was very much annoyed by the almost servile affection that Evadne professed for her father. She would dart behind him, put her hands over his eyes while she kissed him, and then ask him to guess who it was. She pursued him with all manner of little attentions; she waited upon him continually. If he expressed a wish, she flew to obey it. She read to him, she sang to him; and it was all done so naturally and so gracefully that no one could find fault. She said to him one day, before the whole family:

"I do not like calling you 'Mr. Cameron.' I wish you would let me say 'papa.'"

Fashion Plates.

A SULENDID DRESS IN ONE-PIECE STYLE.



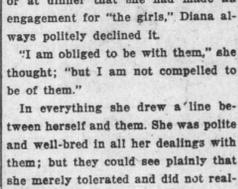
2984

2980—As here shown, serge and satin are combined. The design would also be good for crepe de chine and satin. Black satin and velvet with a bit of color used as piping, would be nice. Tulle gabardine with old blue, is effective, or serge with braiding. The dress measures about 1 1/2 yard at the foot.

The pattern is cut in 7 sizes: 34, 36, 38, 40, 42, 44 and 46 inches bust measure. Size 38 requires 4 1/2 yards of 40-inch material.

A pattern of this illustration mailed to any address on receipt of 10c. in silver or 1c. and 2c. stamps.

A SIMPLE FROCK FOR THE LITTLE MISS.



2990

2990—One may chose gingham, percale or lawn for this style, or checked or plaid suiting. An attractive effect is gained by cutting waist and pockets bias. The sleeve may be finished in wrist or elbow length.

The pattern is cut in 5 sizes: 2, 4, 6, 8 and 10 years. Size 6 requires 2 1/2 yards of 36 inch material.

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CHAPTER XIX

Lady Cameron began to think that the time of probation was almost over, and that it would be prudent now to return to the country. They had spent ten days in the bijou house, and they were by no means comfortable, for, as Lady Cameron confided to her daughters, Mr. Cameron seemed too large for the place, and Diana made the rooms look exceedingly ordinary. It was time now to go back in triumph to Furness. She had been considerate enough to Diana; now the war, if war it must be, would begin in earnest. She resolved to speak to her husband at once about it; but on the same day that she made the resolution a note was brought to her which changed her plans.

There had been a slight unpleasantness that morning, and the smoldering fire had burst almost into flame. The four ladies were alone after breakfast, and the conversation turned upon Stonedale. Lady Cameron had that morning received a letter from the Duchess, saying that the family were going to Stonedale, and hoped shortly to see her there. Her ladyship was so delighted that she could not refrain from showing the letter to her daughters.

"The dear Duchess!" she exclaimed for the twentieth time. "How charming it will be to see her at Furness. What an addition the Stonedale party will be!"

And then Evadne, who never lost a chance, saw her way to vent her spite once more on Diana.

"Do you think, mamma," she asked, "that the Duchess will like Furness? It is very different in style from Stonedale."

Lady Cameron smiled, quite understanding her daughter's motive; whilst the once mistress of Furness sat with a pale, impassive countenance, apparently unconcerned.

"I have no doubt, my dear," replied her ladyship, "that with a few alterations Furness may be made into a very presentable place; but it certainly requires alterations." Lady Cameron turned to Diana, who had never once raised her eyes during the conversation. "It will be a great advantage to you, Diana, to visit Stonedale."

And through Diana's brain rang the phrase she hated, the word she detested—"It is an excellent thing for Diana." She could have fancied that both girls were saying the words now.

"You are mistaken," she said, proudly. "I have not and never had the least desire to visit Stonedale," and she felt sure that Evadne whispered laughingly of "sour grapes."

"Indeed, my dear!" said Lady Cameron, with upraised brows which spoke more strongly than words. "Perhaps," she continued, "I should be more accurate if I said that it would be a great advantage to you to know the Duchess."

"I have never wished, and never shall wish, to know the Duchess," returned Diana.

And again the words "sour grapes" were distinctly audible.

Diana turned on her foe, whose laughing eyes were full of malice.

"I would rather," she said—"twenty thousand times rather—have sour grapes of my own than pluck the ripe ones belonging to others; and I would rather never go into society at all than be admitted to the very highest through the patronage of inferior people."

"I think, my dears, we will close the discussion," said Lady Cameron. "It is not a very becoming one."

After a few minutes, Diana left the room, feeling that, though she had failed to win a victory over herself, she had at least given her companions a few home truths to think over.

Lady Cameron turned angrily to Evadne.

"Why are you so rude, so insulting to Diana?"

"It is so amusing, mamma! I like to see her when she is angry."

"It is very bad policy," said Lady Cameron, "and very bad taste."

From that hour the hatred against them deepened in Diana's heart. Nothing seemed to be left sacred to her. Her father, who had been the idol of her life, was charmed by these girls, one of whom would call him "papa."

(To be continued.)

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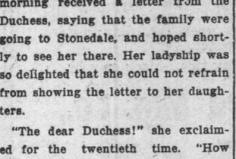
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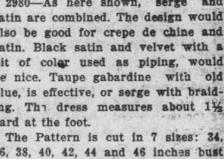
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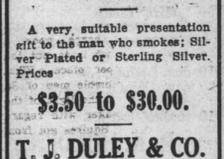
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